

# City Happenings



April 2010

An eNewsletter from the City of Lexington, Nebraska



## Dawson County Opportunity Center



Phase 1 renovation for the Dawson County Opportunity Center is essentially complete, including exterior painting for the entire building. Phase 1 was completed in partnership with Lexington Public Schools. About a third of the south (left) end will house LPS's Early Learning Academy (preschool), Parent Student Resource Center, and other educational related activities.

The City is currently bidding Phase two improvements — about the middle third space — which will include shared-use space for expanded education, job training, entrepreneurial education, business and employment support services, and other economic development uses.

The Opportunity Center is the former Wal-mart building, 1501 Plum Creek Parkway, across from Tyson Fresh Meats. The City purchased the 64,000 square foot building in May 2008, using Community Development Block Grant re-use funds.

Renovations are being funded using a mixture of state and federal grants, as well as local public and private funding.

## Legend Oaks

Twelve townhome units are under construction, four of which are complete, at the Legend Oaks housing project, located on North Adams between 18th & 20th Streets. In addition to the residential units, a clubhouse is also part of the neighborhood plan. Designed for senior (55+) rental living, Legend Oaks is administered by the Lexington Housing Authority. For more information, Contact Diane Adams at LHA, 308-324-4633.



## Soccer Stadium Progress Continues



### Recreation Complex 13th & Airport Road

The spectator area at Lexington's new Soccer Stadium now boasts a protective guard rail. As reported in the previous issue of City Happenings, 600 seats of bleachers were added in February. The spectator area is elevated, and

connects to the south gate with a 10-foot wide sidewalk.

Looking out that south gate (second photo), you would see earth-moving activities occurring. This is in preparation of a building that will house concessions, restrooms, maintenance, and changing areas for soccer players.

The Soccer Stadium project is a joint venture between the City of Lexington and Lexington Public Schools, with assistance from the Adult Soccer League.

The Stadium should be ready for competitions late summer 2010.



## Lexington Named a Tree City USA for 13th Consecutive Year

Lexington has been named a Tree City USA City for the 13th year in a row. The designation honors Lexington's commitment to nurturing a diverse "urban forest." Tree Board member **Dave Stenberg** traveled to Lincoln April 6 to represent Lexington as a recipient at the annual award ceremony.

In 2009 the City of Lexington planted about 400 trees, pruned 300, and removed 35, mostly in City parks.

Arbor Day 2010 is April 30. The Tree Board and the City are planning tree-planting and awareness activities. Citizens are encouraged to participate by planting trees too. The Tree Board recommends the following trees as best fits for Lexington's needs, climate, and soils: Manchurian Ash, Japanese Elm, Coffeetree, Accolade Elm, Triumph Elm, Ginkgo, Hackberry, American Linden, American Elm ("Valley Forge" cultivar), Miyabe Maple, Orange Osage, London Planetree, Lacebark Elm, Discovery Elm, Goldenraintree, Honeylocust, Littleleaf Linden, Sugar Maple, Chinkapin Oak, Japanese Pagodatree, and Walnut.



## Municipal Building Renovation Starts



(left)  
Northeast corner of the city building project

(right)  
Walls being framed within the garage area.

Work began mid-February on remodeling and expansion of the City's 41-year-old Municipal Building, 406 E. 7th Street.

The project will add new space on the north, as well as renovate much of the interior space. Expansion of the Police Department space will be

concentrated on the northeast side, where much of the initial work is being done.

Visitors should be prepared for changing parking availability — to the south side of the building — during the project, which is expected to continue into the summer months.



### Remember, you're not just getting rid of weeds and pests



#### Choose earth-friendly landscaping

Did you know that herbicides and pesticides are harmful to our kids, pets, and the environment?

The chemicals in these materials pollute our waterways if washed from our lawns and gardens into storm drains or roadside ditches that lead directly to our lakes and rivers. Practicing earth-friendly landscaping in your yard and garden can help to protect kids, pets, and our waterways.

So what can you do? Simple.

- Select plants native to Nebraska. These plants require less fertilizer and water, and are more disease resistant.
- Avoid over-watering your lawn — it needs about 1 inch of rain per week.
- Use mulch around trees and plants to help retain water, reduce weeds, and minimize the need for pesticides.
- Mow your lawn high — 3 inches is the rule. Follow your community's leaf pick-up guidelines. Try mowing grass clippings and leaves into your lawn — they make good fertilizers.
- Use herbicides and pesticides sparingly and limit application to problem areas only.

Choose earth-friendly landscaping and help keep our water clean.



Find out more at [www.cityoflex.com](http://www.cityoflex.com)

Support provided by NDEQ



## Fun with the 2010 Census

Find out your city's 2010 Census participation rate to date by going to the website <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/>. Scroll down to "Mail Participation Rate," then click on "Participation Rate." On the next page, a box will appear where you can type in your city name or ZIP Code. Choose "Local View" from the blue box on the left, and it will zoom in, although not necessarily in the center of the City.

The site is updated once a day. During the first couple of weeks this site was reporting, Lexington's rate was about the same as the national average. Nebraska's overall participation was among the top five in the nation, although Lexington was slightly lower than most other nearby Cities, and lower than its Census 2000 rate.

If you did not receive a Census Questionnaire, ask for another by calling toll-free 866-872-6868.



**Don't Delay - send in your Census Form Today!**

## Property Maintenance Corner



by **Bill Brecks**  
Chief  
Building  
Inspector

Section 302.8 of the International Property Maintenance Code describes a common violation in regards to motor vehicles. When you allow your vehicles to remain in disrepair or unlicensed you have violated the code. Upon inspection of your property the Code enforcement officer will placard your vehicle with a green Property Maintenance Compliance Violation. On this placard you will find a couple of important details.

- Date of violation
- Date for compliance
- Property address
- Your right to appeal

It is important to promptly address this issue to avoid further action by the Building Department (i.e., towing, impoundment).

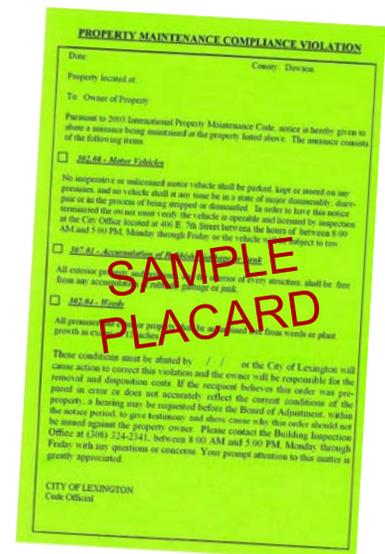
If your vehicle has been removed by the City:

1. make the arrangements for the vehicle to ensure it is no longer a violation;
2. go to Building Department to complete release form; and
3. take release form to impound lot to retrieve your vehicle.

### Section of the day:

#### 302.8 Motor vehicles.

Except as provided for in other regulations, no inoperative or unlicensed motor vehicle shall be parked, kept or stored on any premises, and no vehicle shall at any time be in a state of major disassembly, disrepair, or in the process of being stripped or dismantled. Painting of vehicles is prohibited unless conducted inside an approved spray booth.



## EnergyWise Tip: For household energy (and \$) savings, "Look for the ENERGY STAR®!"

The U.S. government has a program that can help you make an EnergyWise decision when purchasing electric appliances for the home. Always look for the ENERGY STAR logo!

When buying an appliance, remember that it has two price tags: one that you pay at the store and another that you pay for the energy and water the appliance uses once you get it home. ENERGY STAR qualified appliances incorporate advanced technologies that use 10-50 percent less energy and water than standard models. The money you save on your utility bills can more than make up for the cost of a more expensive but more efficient ENERGY STAR model.

Simple actions can make a big difference. If just one in 10 homes used ENERGY STAR qualified appliances, the change would be like planting 1.7 million new acres of trees.

### FOCUS: Refrigerators

In most households, the refrigerator is the single biggest energy consuming kitchen appliance. Looking for the ENERGY STAR could make a huge difference when considering the purchase of a

new refrigerator. For example, replacing a refrigerator bought in 1990 with a new ENERGY STAR qualified model would save enough energy to light the average household for nearly four months.



### Other refrigerator EnergyWise Tips:

You may also be interested to know that you can reduce the amount of energy your refrigerator or freezer uses, whether with a standard or an ENERGY STAR qualified model:

- Position your refrigerator away from a heat source such as an oven, a dishwasher, or direct sunlight from a window.
- Cleaning the coils (on the back or underneath) will help transfer the heat and make the unit run less.
- Make sure the door seals are airtight.
- Keep your refrigerator between 35 and 38 degrees Fahrenheit and your freezer at 0 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Minimize the amount of time the refrigerator door is open.
- Recycle older or second refrigerators – or if you have a second older inefficient refrigerator for refreshments, consider unplugging it! Ask your local public power utility for more info on a refrigerator recycling program that is currently available.

For more information about the ENERGY STAR program visit: [www.energystar.gov/](http://www.energystar.gov/)  
If you are interested in knowing about additional steps you can take to conserve water and improve your energy efficiency, contact Lexington Utilities System (308-324-2343). Lots of useful energy efficiency information is also available at [www.nppd.com](http://www.nppd.com).

Lexington Utilities System wants you to get the most energy value for your money. It costs far less to save energy than it does to build a new power plant to generate additional power.



## Subscribe

To subscribe to Lexington *City Happenings*, fill out the form at [www.ci.lexington.ne.us/aboutus.asp](http://www.ci.lexington.ne.us/aboutus.asp). If you have comments or suggestions, contact Dennis Burnside, [dburnside@cityoflex.com](mailto:dburnside@cityoflex.com), 308-324-2341. You are encouraged to forward this to others you think may be interested. Archives available online.

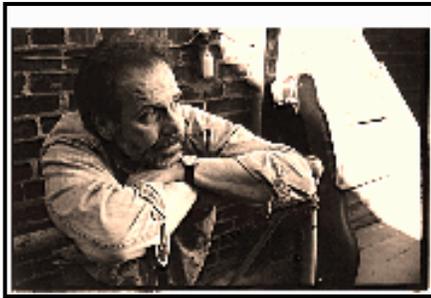




## April Library News

**Lexington Public Library**  
907 North Washington St.  
by Kathy Thomsen  
Library Director

The Lexington Public Library will feature two Nebraska Humanities Council programs during the month of April. Both programs are also sponsored by the Lexington Library Memorial Fund and the Lexington Community Foundation.



On April 15 at 7:00 p.m., **C. A. Waller** of Lincoln, Neb., will present the program "I've Got the Blues and I Can't Be Satisfied." The Wichita Blues Society Newsletter refers to Waller as "one of the Midwest's finest guitarists with his gutsy slide and fingerpicking styles ...a show not to miss if you are a country blues fan."

On April 29 at 7:00 p.m. **Charlotte Endorf** will present the program "Excess Baggage: Riding the Orphan



8,500 miles seeking the last surviving riders and the descendents of riders, who rode the Orphan Train between the years 1854 and 1929, so that she could document their stories. Her presentation is educational and entertaining; making this little known segment of Nebraska history come to life for audiences of all ages.

**Silvia Pettem** will present her slides and talk about the story behind her writing the book, Someone's Daughter: In Search of Justice for Jane Doe.



It began in April, 1954 when a young woman known only as "Jane Doe" was found murdered west of Boulder, CO. Silvia will take you through the twists and turns of trying to identify Jane Doe until the fall of 2009, when Jane Doe's identity was confirmed. Come listen to the story of "Someone's Daughter" at 7:00 pm on May 4. This program also is sponsored by the Lexington Library Memorial Fund and the Lexington Community Foundation.

## Sign up for Summer Reading



"Make a Splash – READ!" - will begin on May 25. The kick-off program for summer reading will be June 1 at 10:30 am when **Adam White** will present the show "A Splash of Magic." This show provides interactive comedy and magic for the whole family.





See ya later,  
refrigerator...

...Hello \$35

Chances are, that old working refrigerator or freezer in your garage or basement is running up your electric bill. That's because it can use three to four times as much energy as a newer one.

It still works and you don't want to just throw it out...so what can you do?

Beginning March 1, 2010, you can be a part of our refrigerator recycling program. With just a call, you can arrange to have your secondary refrigerator or freezer picked up by a reputable company who specializes in recycling appliances and receive a check for \$35. It's as easy as that.

To schedule a **FREE** pickup,  
call toll-free **1-866-444-9160**  
or visit [www.jacoinc.net](http://www.jacoinc.net)

#### Recycling by JACO Environmental

JACO Environmental are appliance recycling specialists. They will pick up working, secondary refrigerators and freezers and convert 95 percent of each into recyclable material for reuse. Toxic materials, like Freon and mercury, are extracted and rendered harmless. That's good for the environment.

For program guidelines and more information about other EnergyWise programs, please go to [www.nppd.com](http://www.nppd.com)

This program is partially funded through the Waste Reduction and Recycling Incentive Grant Program of the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality.

**ENERGYWISE**<sup>SM</sup>  
Use less. Spend less. Do more.

## Tax Credits Available for Energy Efficiency Improvements

The Energy Office has a number of different resources that excel in providing the latest in federal tax credits or incentives for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Some resources do a better job in areas than others. Below are highlighted the areas of expertise for each of the sources listed. Use the URLs below to find more details on the internet.

### Tax Credits for Home Improvements, New Homes, Home Builders and Commercial Buildings

[http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=tax\\_credits.tx\\_index](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=tax_credits.tx_index)

Source: ENERGY STAR®

- For home improvements, windows and doors, insulation, HVAC, geothermal heat pumps and water heaters
- Tax credits for new homes — builders only
- Deductions for commercial buildings
- Credits for biomass stoves, solar energy systems, small wind energy systems and fuel cells

### Tax Credits for Homes and Vehicles

<http://ase.org/content/article/detail/2654>

Source: Alliance to Save Energy

- Hybrid and diesel vehicle tax credit
- Credits for home energy-efficiency improvements and geothermal heat pumps
- Solar energy and fuel cells tax credit

### Tax Credits for Consumers and Businesses

<http://energytaxincentives.org/>

Source: The Tax Incentives Assistance Project

- Passenger vehicles tax credits
- Tax credits for home insulation, windows and sealing, home heating and cooling equipment
- On-site renewable energy sources, fuel cells and microturbines

### Tax Breaks for Businesses, Utilities and Governments

<http://www.energy.gov/additionaltaxbreaks.htm>

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

The Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 Energy Tax Incentives:

- Renewable energy incentives, transportation and domestic fuel security, energy conservation and efficiency

